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## Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, You have promised that "As Your days, so shall Your strength be." We praise You that You know what is ahead of us this week and will provide us with exactly what we need in each hour and in each circumstance. We relax in the knowledge that You will neither be surprised by what evolves or incapable of sustaining us in any eventualities. You will show us the way all through this week.

Therefore, we resist the temptation to be anxious or to worry over whether we have what it takes. Instead, we will receive what You have offered: hope for our discouraging times, replenishing energy for our tired times, and renewed vision for our down times. We dedicate this week to You. Protect us from the pride that supposes we can be self-sufficient, and the vanity that refuses to submit our needs to You. Help us not only to walk more closely with You, but to be open to Your encouragement through others. May we all live this week as a never-to-be-repeated opportunity to glorify You by serving our Nation with patriotism and loyalty. In our Lord's name. Amen.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able majority leader, Senator DOLE, is recognized.

Mr. DOLE. Thank you, Mr. President.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, we will have morning business until the hour of 3 p.m., with Senators to speak for up to 5 minutes each. Senator DASCHLE, or his designee, is in control of the first 90

minutes; Senator COVERDELL, or his designee, is in control of the next 90 minutes. If there are no requests for morning business, then we may stand in recess during part of that period until 3 o'clock.

At 3 o'clock, we will resume consideration of H.R. 2937. We will have no roll-call votes. There will be a cloture vote on H.R. 2937, the White House Travel Office legislation at 2:15 p.m. on Tuesday. Under the provisions of rule XXII, Senators have until 1 p.m. today to file first-degree amendments to H.R. 2937. Hopefully, we can complete action on the Travel Office bill on Tuesday.

Other items possible for consideration this week, if we can work them out, are: Amtrak authorization; the firefighters age discrimination bill; and the balanced budget constitutional amendment.

I hope we might be able to pass the balanced budget constitutional amendment early this week or next week. It is supported by 80 percent of the American people. We addressed some of the concerns that some of my colleagues who voted against the amendment expressed last year about protecting Social Security. We believe we will have language that should satisfy real concerns—if somebody is playing games, we will not satisfy them—if they have real concerns. We are also concerned about protecting Social Security.

In our balanced budget, which we sent to the President, which he vetoed, we did not touch Social Security. We believe we can overcome some of the objections that some have if they are real concerns. Otherwise, we will not be able to do that.

Tomorrow is tax freedom day. That is when people can take a break from taxes. Starting on the 8th of May, they start working for themselves instead of the governments who impose taxes. It will be a good day to pass the gas tax repeal. It seems to me it might have a nice ring to it.

Mr. President, 4.3 cents may not seem like a lot per gallon, but it adds

up to about \$4.8 billion a year, and it does not go into any fund to build highways. It goes into what we call deficit reduction, which has only been done one other time. That was on a very temporary basis between 1990 and 1993, when 2.5 cents went into tax reduction. That was necessary to get an agreement on the 1993 budget. Normally, gas taxes are used for highways, bridges, and other structures, and mass transit to help improve travel conditions for people to make the highways safer, mass transit safer.

But this gas tax by President Clinton for deficit reduction is permanent. We think it should be repealed. We can find ways to cut spending or some other way to offset it if we are not going to add to the deficit. We think we can do that.

There is a bill at the desk, Calendar No. 374, H.R. 2337, the taxpayer bill of rights. Sometime before the day is out, I will ask consent that we be able to take up that bill and offer one amendment—that would be the gas tax repeal—and send it back to the House. I am certain they will pass it very quickly. As I understand, there is bipartisan support now for repealing the gas tax. Maybe we can accomplish it on that revenue bill.

I have also asked Senator LOTT and Senator LOTT has reported to me he had a good discussion on Friday with Senator DASCHLE with reference to scheduling the minimum wage. We believe we have made a fair proposal. We hope it might be accepted.

Otherwise, I think the matter people are really concerned about in America is a balanced budget and whether we have the will to amend or at least send a constitutional amendment to the States and see if three-fourths of the States will ratify it. If that happens,

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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